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Statement by the President of the Security Council

At the 5935th meeting of the Security Council, held on 16 July 2008, in connection with the Council's consideration of the item entitled "Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan", the President of the Security Council made the following statement on behalf of the Council:

"The Security Council condemns in the strongest possible terms the attack on 8 July 2008 on a UNAMID military and police convoy in Um Hakibah by 200 fighters on horses and in 40 vehicles, using sophisticated weaponry and tactics, which resulted in the death of 7 peacekeepers and a further 22 United Nations/African Union personnel being wounded. This unacceptable act of extreme violence is the largest attack on UNAMID since the transfer of authority from the African Union Mission in Sudan on 31 December 2007. The Council is particularly concerned that the attack was premeditated, deliberate and intended to inflict casualties.

"The Security Council welcomes the United Nations investigation under way and the Government of the Sudan's statement to assist the United Nations investigation. It calls on the Government of the Sudan to do its utmost to ensure that the perpetrators of the attack are swiftly identified and brought to justice. The Council underlines its determination to take action against those responsible after hearing the outcome of UNAMID's investigation.

"The Security Council expresses its condolences to the Governments of Rwanda, Ghana and Uganda for the deaths of their peacekeepers and to the victims' families. It commends the dedication of UNAMID personnel. The Council stresses that any attack or threat against UNAMID is unacceptable, and demands that there is no reoccurrence. It underlines that attacks on United Nations peacekeepers during an armed conflict can constitute war crimes under applicable international law and calls upon all parties to comply with their obligations under international humanitarian law.

"The Security Council calls on all parties to agree to a cessation of hostilities, to engage fully and constructively in the political process under the leadership of the new UN/AU joint Chief Mediator, Mr. Djibrill Yipènè Bassolé, and to cooperate fully with the deployment of UNAMID and respect its security and freedom of movement.

"The Security Council further calls on the United Nations and all parties to facilitate the rapid and complete deployment of UNAMID and on capable Member States to contribute the helicopter and transportation units necessary to ensure the successful implementation of UNAMID's mandate."

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